A LIFE VIEW FOR MODERNS

PIETER K. ROEST

A LIFE VIEW FOR MODERNS

and

LIFE, DEATH, FATE AND FREE WILL

Two Lectures

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THE THEOSOPHICAL PRESS
OLCOTT
WHEATON, ILLINOIS

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The Theosophical Press

Printed in U.S.A.

AUTHOR'S PREFACE

This booklet contains the substance of two lectures given to American audiences in 1938. They belong together, as an attempt to present some fragments of Theosophy to thoughtful modern men and women. Their cordial reception by these audiences prompted this publication.

While distinctly non-academic, popular expositions, they are no food for babes! The language may be simple and many illustrations may aid the reader, but these lectures *do* require *thought*. The first may even be considered "too deep" for general consumption; but the audiences to whom it was addressed invariably endured both the introduction and the metaphysical groundwork and appreciated them as the foundations on which the inspiring theosophical picture of Man was built. Without this preparation—which one can of course omit—the inspiration lacks the intellectual support which makes it *last*.

These fragments of theosophical teaching should not be mistaken for the whole. Their presentation is admittedly incomplete, and colored by the personal outlook of the author, who meant to *stir* thought, not to silence it. For answers to the questions that inevitably will arise the reader is referred to the rich litera-

ture available on almost every phase of theosophical thought. Suggestive reading lists are sent to inquirers by the publishers of this booklet; and local branch libraries of the Theosophical Society will always gladly lend assistance to those who want to study in earnest.

August 31, 1938 Pieter K. Roest
"Olcott," Wheaton, Ill.

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A LIFE VIEW FOR MODERNS

INTRODUCTION

Our life is meaningless without an adequate philosophy, a life-view which gives it purpose and inspiration. To millions living is just a boring routine; relieved only by the "thrills" which the press, movies and radio provide; but leaving the soul empty and hungry. No wonder so many break down under the savage strain of "civilization," or commit suicide to escape from it! That was not true for our grandfathers; they *knew* (or at least *thought* they knew) what life was all about. To them right and wrong were clearly defined; and while it might not always be easy to live the "good life," there was no question about its nature. Certain fundamental ideas were universally accepted; nobody questioned these "axiomatic truths," which formed a firm and clear framework of thought for all decent folk in Christendom. But *we* live in an age when all values and standards are in doubt; when many of our predecessors' most sacred convictions have been discarded as superstitions; when even the deeply religious suffer from intellectual uncertainty. Listen to the words of the sophisticated agnostic, Ricardo, in Edna St. Vincent Millay's "Conversation At Midnight," when he compares us with a variety of animals that have

accomplished things like those we boast of—the beaver's building dams for instance; the eagle's flight; the ordered societies of bees and ants—and says: "let us not hope to survive them," and asks:

With what shall we pay our entrance into an exclusive Paradise, from which the beaver and the ant are barred?
With a non-functioning excellence?—An atrophied Superiority?—With this vestigial mind? . . .
. . . Let us abdicate now; let us disintegrate quietly here, convivially imbibing
The pleasanter poisons.

That is the goal of human striving offered to modern man by a thoughtful contemporary! And Georgia Harkness, a religious leader of Youth, writes a book called "The Recovery of Ideals," in which she states that while we *must* have ideals, while "ideals are psychologically valid, whether they are cosmically grounded is another question." We are asked to live by ideals, but told in the same breath that it is doubtful whether cosmic law supports our efforts! We are exhorted to "live greatly," but if we ask why and how, we are told that there is "a lack of certainty in the realm of morals and religion," and that the "prevailing mood of our times is a sense of the dissolution of all values." On such sad food we are supposed

to nourish our religious idealism!

But the fact remains that idealism rarely survives unless strong intellectual conceptions support it. Ideals not rooted in deep convictions quickly wither away in the brutal atmosphere of modern life. We *need* a new life-view; a philosophy of depth and daring, linked to what we *know* already of truth; a vision of existence which once more will gather up the fragments of our being and make us, moderns, whole.

THE WISDOM TRADITION

Such a life-view exists! It has existed for innumerable ages; always known to the few, unknown to the many except from time to time in its most elementary, and as a rule symbolic, formulations. It is the vision of the Great Ones of all times; the view of reality held in common by all men whose genius and character enabled them to penetrate to the bedrock of existence where eternal truth is found.

In ancient India this view was known as Brahma-vidya, God-wisdom; and also as the Gupta Vidya or Secret Science; since of necessity it must remain hidden from the multitude who are still blinded by appearances, while it remained for souls committed to reality, for initiate-disciples, "to understand the mysteries of the kingdom of God," as Jesus put it. A Greek philosopher in ancient Alexandria,

Ammonius Saccas, translated the term Brahma-vidya into Greek as *Theo-sophia,* Divine Wisdom, or the Knowledge of the Divine Nature; but by whatever name it is called, its students recognize it as the knowledge of the deepest truths of being. It was this Wisdom-Science which formed the basis for the arcane tradition taught in the Mystery Schools of ancient India, Persia, Egypt, Greece, and other civilizations, as "the Mysteries;" today it forms the basis of that newer formulation of great truths which must be credited to The Theosophical Society and is called *Theosophy.* It is preserved intact from age to age by a remarkable group of pledged initiates, an occult Order of vast antiquity called the White Brotherhood, and known in Christian legend as the Communion of Saints, or as the Knights of the Holy Grail. The existence of men of extraordinary wisdom and knowledge should not any longer be held in doubt by Westerners whose studies have acquainted them with Lao Tze and Pythagoras, with Christ and Buddha, and whose recreation includes reading about such men today in travel-narratives like those by Paul Brunton. But whether the existence of a great occult Fraternity is recognized or not, that which its members have deemed safe to teach the world is undeniably on record, "that he who runs may read"!

Hence, moderns who ignore Theosophy ignore their greatest chance of learning swiftly and comparatively easily what the noblest Minds of all times hold in common as *fundamental truths;* such truths as belong equally to science and religion, philosophy and ethics, art and life; such truths as are beyond all creeds, all "schools of thought"; such truths as unify the mind and make man once more "see life steadily and see it whole." That some of the West's great thinkers are still unacquainted with these truths today is hardly pardonable; but even before they were re-proclaimed by the Founders of The Theosophical Society in a dogma-ridden civilization these basic teachings were available to earnest *seekers,* in such secret Orders as the original Rosicrucians, from men of deeper learning such as Paracelsus, under the veil of symbolism in Alchemy and Masonry, and in the deeper works of the ancients. In the East, public knowledge of the existence of such wisdom-teaching has never disappeared, and recognition of its living Adepts survives in India and surrounding countries to this very day.

"But," you may say, "the opinions of even the most noble souls are still mere speculations. What *can* anyone know positively that is not known by modern Science? What other method to really *know* exists but that which Science

uses?" To this there is one brief reply: Our greatest scientists recognize today that Science is but *one* of many efforts on the part of man to reach true understanding, and by no means the only one that brings results which can be practically applied. The cautious, step-by-step advance of modern Science is indeed magnificent. But the penetrating vision of the Sage and Saint, the Poet and the Prophet, leaps ahead of the laborious processes of reason based on physical observations. The accuracy of Science is but the accuracy of facts and measurements; its *theories* are no more sure than those of thinkers in other times and climes, as their rapid change in one half-century amply proves! To *real* scientists their knowledge is an "art-form," an artistic thought-structure built temporarily from the measurable aspects only of —not reality, but—our *picture,* our *impressions* of the world about us! The cock-sure nineteenth-century materialist is dead, and so are his certainties. The important thing is to find a view of life in which the *facts* of Science, and the events of our experience, blend harmoniously with our aspirations and purposes; so that we may live without tearing inner conflicts. That, obviously, requires a knowledge of truths deeper than those which scientific instruments reveal; although we certainly should *not* ignore the surface-facts in which

the deeper laws find their material expression.

But this is not all. The deeper laws—whether of Science or of Art—are never found by observation, but by intuition, by creative imagination. All great inventors, scientists and artists agree on that. Observations serve to confirm hypotheses, or to modify them, until the correct expression of the laws is reached. And this was known more clearly to the ancients than to most of our moderns, hypnotized by the "facts" of their sense-world, and worshipping intellect beyond intuition. Ignore the intellect, and you get vagueness and distorted presentation. Ignore the intuition, and you get lifeless systems of ideas; coherent in themselves perhaps, but out of touch with living truth and all the nobler values of life; besides always conflicting with equally coherent systems based on *other* principles, or interpreting *other* facts.

Theosophy requires the definite development of *all* our faculties in the quest for truth. Only where intuition and intellect, spiritual aspiration and honest practice, theory and life, go hand in hand, can we expect wholesome results. In India this integration of the *whole* man has been known from time immemorial as the *condition* for achievement of that deeper knowledge which the Great Ones possess; it is there called union or "yoga"—a much abused word

that has lost almost all its meaning by being applied to a host of silly imitations. Psychological laws today are the same as they were ten thousand years ago. Theosophy is not speculation, but a statement of what man has discovered of the universe by the deepest insight and the keenest observation; so no one needs to worry that he would waste his time on "speculations" in studying Theosophy! Its formulation may change with changing civilizations—truth must ever find new ways of expression as human minds change and grow; but its basic ideas are timeless, like mathematics or great Art. It is only a few of these fundamental concepts that we shall present here; but in the framework of these vast ideas we shall soon be able to fill in details by further study. Then we shall find that—paradoxical as it may seem—the most ancient Wisdom provides us with the most modern life-view! For Wisdom is the vision of that which is eternal; and the characteristic of the eternal is its youthfulness, its quality of clothing its deathless beauty in ever-new garments of the present.

I. REALITY IS ALIVE!

Although few of us realize it, on our conceptions of Reality, God, Nature and Man depends the direction as well as the quality of

our life from day to day. Such basic views color everything we think or feel, and therefore determine to an enormous degree our conduct. The life-view which I want to present to you here is not made up of a few loose notions, but built on the solid foundation of eternal principles. The greatest of these is that reality is *alive;* that the whole universe is the manifestation of one vast Life. This ought to be a familiar idea to Christians, for the initiate-apostle St. Paul made it his first statement to the people of Athens. He called it the Unknown God, and said that "in Him we live and move and have our being." But few draw the logical conclusion from this idea: that *nothing* is absolutely dead; that there is not even "dead matter"; that every last atom is *a life!* This is the basis of the life-view of the Sages, Poets and Prophets of all time.

Of course this is utter nonsense to the sense-worshiping materialist; it is blasphemy to medieval theology which ruthlessly severed the One Life—God—from its material manifestations; yet it is very simple and obvious to any person who thinks deeply and has not lost the direct insight of childhood. All attempts to explain this world of ours as "a fortuitous concourse of atoms" of "dead matter" were, are and ever will be dismal failures. The simple fact remains that in ourselves *life* is what we

experience, *not* matter. For even our own body we know only through *sensation,* which is an attribute of *life;* and all we know about matter is therefore second-hand, through the sensations by which matter affects our life. But that life of ours, its sensations, feelings, thoughts, etc., we know first-hand, directly and unquestionably. It is therefore rather foolish to try to explain the universe and all the living beings it contains, including our own consciousness, in terms of matter which is almost a complete mystery to us! Explaining the familiar by the unfamiliar is a pastime for lunatics perhaps, but it does not lead to knowledge! It is perfectly reasonable however to do the reverse: to seek an understanding of the universe in terms of *life;* for *that* we know, of *that* we are certain, *that* is familiar to all of us. This is what humanity's great Souls have always done. To Them cosmic Life is the source, the essence and the goal of all manifestations—whether *we* call them spiritual or material, good or evil, ugly or beautiful. Nothing can be excluded from that supreme brotherhood of existence; for Life is *One* in all its innumerable forms. A life-revolutionizing thought!

II. LIFE IS TRIUNE

Like ourselves, the cosmic Life operates in three distinct ways. This is the second great

idea we must grasp. It is quite familiar to students of comparative religion; for we find it symbolized in almost every great creed as a trinity of Gods, or a triune God. In Hinduism, for instance, we find Shiva, Vishnu, and Brahma; in Buddhism: Spirit, Light, and Darkness; in Egyptian religion: Osiris, Isis, and Horus; in Christianity: Father, Son, and Holy Ghost; and in the Chinese *Tao Teh King* we read: "Tao produced One; One produced Two; Two produced Three; Three produced all things." Let us look at ourselves to see what this may mean.

We know only our *own* consciousness directly. When we turn it outward, we perceive the material world; or rather we perceive the *picture* that our mind makes of something outside of itself. When we turn our attention to changes in consciousness itself—instead of in the "pictures" the mind creates—we *know and feel;* this is definitely different from seeing or thinking. Finally, there is the assertion of our mastery over either feeling or thought, or both, which we call *will;* it rises from the very depth of our being, from the Self, the undefinable center of our nature. It is obvious, then, that consciousness links an inner mystery, which we call Self, to an outer mystery, which is clearly *not*-Self. So we have three terms: Self, Not-Self, and their interaction which is consciousness. The latter is naturally triple too; since it

may be concerned with its inner center, the Self; or with its own changing nature; or with its pictures of the Not-Self. The Self and the Not-Self remain mysteries which consciousness is ever trying to solve in terms of itself, of its own operations. Just so in electro-magnetism we have a positive pole of the magnet and a negative pole, with the magnetic flow of force between. But the poles we cannot study; we assume them because they are the beginning and the end of the forces we find flowing; it is only these forces that we can—indirectly in this case—study and measure.

This should help us to understand one of the greatest principles of the Wisdom-tradition. The One Life becomes polarized as it were; somewhat like a soft-iron bar which becomes an electro-magnet when a current of electricity runs through the coils around it. In this condition the One Reality contains two poles—one positive and active, the other negative and passive ("One produced Two"); but there appears immediately a third factor as a result of this polarization, viz., the *interaction* between the two poles ("Two produced Three"), which is the magnetic field with its energies by which visible phenomena are produced. So we find cosmic beginnings described in the sober symbolic statement: "Father-Mother spin a Web"; and it is this "Web" which is also called the "Womb"

of the universe. For it is nothing less than the Universal Mind or Consciousness, the World-Soul in which everything exists that may ever be manifest; just as in the human Soul all human expression is ever potentially present. Hence "Three produced all things." Because the nature of consciousness is the same everywhere—as those proclaim who have realized the identity of their own Soul with the Oversoul—we find a triple activity in the Divine Mind as well as in the human. When touching the passive pole of being, it objectifies itself as *Thought;* in its own essential nature it is *Wisdom*, i. e., knowledge of its own being in all beings, and therefore also universal love; and when touching the active pole of being, the Self, it is *Power,* the unifying principle which "mightily and sweetly ordereth all things," as was once beautifully stated.

This, then, is one view of the triune mystery of Being which we find symbolized in the Trinities of all great religions. The Greeks called it the *Logos,* the Word (see the first chapter of St. John for the Christian version); the Hindus call it *Vach*—the Speech or Utterance of the Eternal. The tremendous practical significance of these great ideas—which may seem so abstract to most of us—will soon be evident as we proceed to consider the *actual* universe, *our* environment, and our very selves, as its expression.

III. THE MYSTERY OF MATTER

When thinkers speak of the ultimate realities as "Spirit" and "Matter," they obviously do not use these words in their popular sense. Their "Matter" is not the matter *we* know from experience, but rather what stands behind or underneath the "objective" world, *Substance,* that which we called "the negative aspect" or "pole" of being—conceivable only as the converse of positive or active being.

What, then, is the matter that *we* know "down here?" Theosophy's answer to this question links up perfectly with modern Science but is far more detailed. It states that the Third Logos, or the Creative *Thought* aspect of the universal Life—seeking to penetrate the mystery of Substance, the "Great Deep" or feminine aspect of being—produces the half-active, half-passive phenomenon which we call "energy." This Thought-Substance combination is *maya,* illusion or appearance, only in the sense of not being an eternal reality in itself but a *product* of the Divine Thought; just as a moving picture is a product of active light containing a certain *pattern,* and the passive screen. The picture is real enough to *us!* But it is a mere illusion, a passing show, from the point of view of the "realities" concerned in its production: the radiating light, the pattern on the film, and the indifferent screen. This image should help us

to grasp the idea that our matter is "energy held in certain patterns." The qualities we find are derived from both sides of reality; the active powers of consciousness reflected in undifferentiated Substance become the characteristic properties of matter: Will caught in passivity is *inertia;* Wisdom provides the pattern or specific *rhythm* of matter; the *Activity* of Mind produces the energy which is in restless *motion.* Thus to Theosophy matter is life objectified; the One Life is truly "vibrant in every atom"; every last atom is *a life!*

Science has come to glimpse this too; the old billiard-ball atom has revealed itself as a charge of negative electricity—in one or more centers called electrons—circling with incredible speed around a positive charge, called a proton. The pattern formed by the electrons is very definite and resists change; it *objects* most vigorously to efforts to break it up. It is this persistent quality of matter which affects us as its objectivity; as a *form* of energy it obeys the universal thought which is the law of its being. Matter is called by modern scientists "a sort of congealed radiation" (Jeans); and the stuff of the world is frankly called "mind stuff" (Eddington); electron and quantum are recognized as "physics infected with thought" (Smuts); and the universe, we are told "can be best pictured as consisting of pure thought" (Jeans). A view

taught to initiates thousands of years before the invention of the spectroscope and the modern atom-smashing devices!

But while modern Science knows only one type of matter—physical—Theosophy recognizes several types, all resolvable into each other and ultimately born of the same substance impregnated with thought. The energies of the Logos form a *variety* of patterns, known to the Hindu philosophers as *tanmatras,* measures; it is only the coarsest of these that arouse a response in our sense-organs and so become perceptible to us. Theosophy tells us of a finer type of matter—interpenetrating the physical as water pervades a sponge—called "astral" because of its luminosity or "starry" quality. This type of matter, we are told, does not affect our optic nerve-endings, and so remains invisible to us. But it does affect a set of finer sense-organs in us and so *can* be perceived by those who have learned to make conscious use of these subtler senses. By such people it has been studied for thousands of years, and it is found to be a vehicle for *emotional* forces—feeling, desire, passion, etc., in exactly the same way that physical matter is the vehicle of physical forces such as electricity, compression, heat, etc. Likewise a still finer type of matter—interpenetrating both the astral and the physical kinds—responds to *thought-energies* such as we ourselves pro-

duce, and is therefore called *mental* matter.

Theosophy states that the deeper consciousness of the true saint and mystic produces energies finer than rational thought; which play in a still finer type of matter than the mental, sometimes called "intuitional" to indicate the nature of consciousness to which it responds. Beyond that is a subtler type still, called "spiritual" for the same reason. Yet all of these materials, in which various degrees of consciousness operate, are essentially the same: the energy of the Logos operating in patterns woven by the Divine Mind. All perform the same function: to serve as a basis or vehicle for various forces of consciousness. They are the materials for vaster thought-structures of which the Divine Architect dreams; they form the stage on which the cosmic drama is to be played.

IV. THE MYSTERY OF EMBODIED LIFE

We now come to the *second* of the three types of cosmic activity. When we *think,* we *project* energy; it is lost so-to-say in the thought, which we distinguish from ourselves. But when we *feel,* we identify ourselves with what is felt; it becomes part of us. Our very life is present in what we feel; feeling is the "heart" of consciousness circulating its life-blood to and fro through the whole of our conscious being.

Just so the second great manifestation of

Logoic life is different from the first; it is in the nature of an outpouring of that Life itself into its thought-created materials. We may perhaps compare this with the way in which we identify ourselves with images which our phantasy creates in day-dreams, or even in the less self-conscious dreams of sleep. It is a life-expression, intimate and vivifying—an identifying of Life with materials. In Scripture it is called "the Word (Logos) becoming flesh," the "Incarnation" of Deity!

The result is: Life embodied in innumerable forms. Thought-forms only at first; but as Life identifies itself with grosser and grosser types of matter the forms become more material too; until at last we perceive them as *physical* forms. But this process is gradual, and takes vast periods of time, in the course of which the various kingdoms of nature appear, with some of which we are acquainted.

First, this life of the Second Logos identifies itself with the subtlest materials only. When it vivifies the finer types of mental matter it imparts to that matter the quality of *response* to thought which gave it its name. In its totality this vivified matter is called "elemental essence"; and the innumerable forms it assumes are collectively called the First Elemental Kingdom. It is a strange semi-conscious sea of living things, thought-forms of the abstract type, each

embodying some abstract idea. But the life seeks grosser materials, and finds these in the grosser mental matter of the same plane. In this grosser stuff only *concrete* thought finds expression; the sea of life formed by innumerable concrete thought-forms is called the Second Elemental Kingdom. Still further Life descends, into astral matter, imparting to it the quality of response to feelings of all kinds, from the finest to the grossest. Hence here we find it develops a kingdom of entities whose very being is desire, emotion, feeling of every variety; the Third Elemental Kingdom. In each of these Kingdoms of Nature (invisible to most of us but nonetheless real) Life is seeking identification with matter, ever grosser matter. It is Life *involving* itself; Life descending into matter; lost in it. When we come to the study of human life we shall see how important this information about Life *involving* itself is to *us.* But for the present we must see what happens at the next stage, when the life of astral matter becomes involved in the finer types of physical matter and arranges the grosser particles of that world into the combinations which collectively we call the *Mineral Kingdom.* Here, in the gross and relatively rigid matter of gases, liquids and solids the great second Life-wave reaches its deepest point; its energies are so "cribbed, cabined and confined"

that we usually do not even recognize them any longer as *life*-energies, and call the mineral world "dead." But a mountain, a lake, a crystal, are no more "dead" than we are; although we might perhaps call the Life in them *asleep.* Yet even in sleep this Life reveals through its casements many of its fascinating qualities. For instance, in all metals we can find response to certain stimuli which is of the same nature as that in plants and animals; to show this was the major contribution of Sir J. C. Bose to Science. He devised delicate instruments which recorded the normal "pulsations" of minerals, and also such abnormal ones as correspond to the fatigue and sickness vibrations, the poison and even death reactions of *living* beings! And do not the combinations and disintegrations of elements, and the action of catalysts in either process, make us think of marriages and divorces, of trusts and trust-promoters and trust-busters in our human world? Why do we take such definite affinities and repulsions as we find in the mineral world for granted, while in our own life we find them as elements of consciousness and dignify them by the names of "taste" and "choice"? And finally, who can deny a mystery of design, as from a mathematically minded artist, in the beauties of innumerable crystals? Look at the infinite variety of ice-crystals on

window-panes or in snow-flakes—and try to think of these as accidental conglomerations of "dead" matter!!

Naturally it is not merely *our* thought that produces forms in the vivified matter of the mental world, nor *our* feelings alone that are embodied in living astral matter. The Wisdom of the One Life embodies itself in innumerable Ideas in subtler matter; these seek whatever expression they can find in the grosser materials which we have mentioned here; but each time with a considerable loss of their original beauty and fire. For all materials *limit,* the more, the grosser they are. Mental forms are limitations of Ideas; astral forms are limitations of mental forms; and physical forms are the most limiting of all. Hence we should not be surprised to find the first expression of these divine Ideas in *physical* matter restricted to such forms as we find in the Mineral Kingdom. Life finds in this Kingdom its greatest limitations; yet even here we see—in crystals, hills, and lakes, in wave and cloud—the beauty and intelligent energy of the One Who dreamed them. How deeply Life is hidden in the stone; veil after veil of matter obscures it! *But it is there and seeks release.* And this alone explains the mystery we call evolution. For evolution means unfolding or unwinding; obviously, there must be a "wrapping in" before

there can be an "unwrapping." It is really astonishing how much we take for granted in our customary views of life; evolution to most of us is something that just happens! But Theosophy makes clear that *involution precedes evolution;* the life and the ideas that have been hidden in veil after veil of matter seek to penetrate through the veils and gradually reveal themselves even in the densest materials, eventually discarding their material robes one by one on the journey back to their Source. Science only observes the changes of forms; Theosophy shows behind these changes an intelligent process of expression, of unfolding ideas and life. Thus we may understand the sequence to the formation of the Mineral Kingdom, viz., the coming into being of the Kingdoms of Organic or "living" Nature.

V. LIVING NATURE

After aeons of experimentation in mineral forms, the life that is imprisoned in physical matter makes for itself a colloid combination of at least sixteen different elements, called *protoplasm,* through which it can express a number of its energies which in the rigid matter of the mineral world remained locked up. In this more plastic material life is able to grow, to move, to assimilate matter to its own, to throw off material that is no longer

useful to its functions, to reproduce itself endlessly, and to respond to stimuli by appropriate inner and outer activity! It is only when we find this remarkable combination of qualities that we *recognize* forms in nature as *alive;* but in the light of the previous pages it is obvious that we have to do only with a fuller *expression* of life through matter, not with an exclusive factor "life" which should be denied to other —less plastic—forms in physical nature. We must never forget that there is nothing but Life; although its expression through matter (its lowest manifestation) varies from the simple rock to the most glorious spiritual Being.

For incalculable ages life has sought expression through minerals. Now, learning to use protoplasm for its vehicle, it builds for itself the innumerable forms of the *Vegetable Kingdom.* The Ideas of the Divine Mind pour themselves out in a riot of expression—the beautiful and fascinating forms of the plant world. Ever more perfectly the life seeks to mould its outer garment of matter after the beauty of the divine Idea within; from the simplest bacteria to the majestic tree, from modest moss to rose or orchid, the vegetable life proclaims the wealth and loveliness of Cosmic Imagination! In these plant forms we meet the beginnings of consciousness as we know it; *sensation* cannot be denied to life awakening from its dreaming

in the vegetable world. However simply, plants *feel;* all those who work and live with them declare. Some experts go so far as to maintain that plants do *think.* You may have heard the story of the tree whose roots had clogged a wooden waterpipe. The pipe was cleaned and the roots cut off beyond the hole in the cement wall that separated tree from waterpipe; the hole was plugged with fresh cement. After a few months the pipe was clogged again, and, cleaning it once more, the people of the house found that the tree had run a root *around* the wall—two times four yards!—and back into its generous waterpipe! A tree that was not to be cheated, evidently!

But whether we acknowledge consciousness in plants or not, we *must* acknowledge it in animals. Even at the earliest stages of organic life we see a differentiation that leads some protoplasmic forms to an existence free from any fixed position. Plants must of course "stay put"; but creatures that can freely move about on earth, in water or in air, have to meet so many more situations, must respond to so many more stimuli, that they soon outstrip the plants in their capacity for *response*—which now becomes their most outstanding characteristic. They develop definite feeling, desire, emotion, passion; and in their eventful lives the latent energies of intelligence are so strongly called

upon that soon we find the evidence of *thought.* This is what we discover in the *Animal Kingdom:* an infinite variety of *forms,* from the simplest to the most complex, expressing an equally wide range of *consciousness,* from the most rudimentary to the most intelligent, as we find for instance in a thorough-bred horse or in a trained police-dog. Life is at last beginning to release its hidden energies of Wisdom through the instinct and intelligence of the brute. It is not only forms that evolve, but also the life within them.

Thus in Theosophy we find the rational explanation of that great mystery of biological Science: organic evolution. By age-long practice in form after form the life within gains mastery enough to build more complex forms; so on and on from simplest cell to mammal and to . . . Man!

VI. MAN—THE MICROCOSM

We have now seen in rough outline how the first outpouring of divine energy results in the numerous types of matter that form the materials for the manifested universe. We might well call it spirit-matter for it does indeed vibrate with the life of God; it is the product of Life awake or active, contacting Life asleep or passive. We also discussed briefly the second outpouring of Life, from the Heart of Being,

vivifying these materials until all of them become instinct with the qualities of response (which in ourselves and at our stage we call consciousness), appropriate to their different degrees of density. We saw this incarnate life dreaming in the Mineral Kingdom, awakening in the Vegetable Kingdom, desiring, feeling and thinking in the Animal Kingdom; using increasingly complex and responsive organisms for its expression—organisms which follow in a succession of steps the model of the divine Ideas that seek expression through them; life evolving its powers parallel with the evolution of forms. All this splendid display of life and form results from the activity of only two of the three aspects of the Divine Life or Logos. We now come to the completion of Life's manifestation—Man, who embodies the energies of all three of Life's aspects and has therefore been called a *microcosm*—a little universe.

We stated before that the characteristic of the First Logos is Power; the force that concentrates and directs all other energies of Life from the center of Being, the Self. It is this force that produces within the Universal Mind innumerable centers that each become a radiating focus of divine Life. These countless "gods" are called Monads in theosophical literature. A helpful image is that of a number of lenses, reading-glasses, held in the light of

the sun, and each producing a definite miniature sun, a *focal center* in which light and heat are concentrated strongly enough to light a match or burn a piece of paper. You may have a thousand reading-glasses and you will get a thousand different focal centers; but each is simply *concentrated sunlight.* Just so the Monads are distinct—"a multitude of heavenly hosts" indeed—yet each is simply concentrated Life Divine, in each the Whole is present. Another image is that of the *seed,* in which the nature of the whole tree is present, as its unfoldment proves.

By using a second reading glass behind the first, we may produce a secondary focal center from the first. It is a weaker manifestation of the sunlight, only a feeble reproduction even of its immediate cause: the light-spot produced by the first lens, nearest to the sun; but it *is* the same energy, it *is* just as truly focussed sunlight! And this will help us to perceive the real nature of Man.

For when the highest animal life has been achieved on a life-bearing planet, the primary centers or Monads of that world begin to use the finest materials, used by these animals, as lenses through which to concentrate their energies *within* the animal organism. So, a Monad, a potential god, puts part of himself into a lesser center, and this secondary center—the

Monad's representative, and of his very nature —becomes the inhabitant of the animal's consciousness and body. When this occurs, the animal life has changed to *human;* a human *Soul* is born!

This then is Man: a fusion of the highest consciousness of the animal with the focussed life of a potential god! In Man alone all aspects of the deity are represented: matter, and the forms it takes in him, represent the divine Thought; his bodily life and its psychological counterpart is divine Wisdom incarnate; his rational "I" or *Ego* represents the centralizing Power of the divine Self. It is this *focus of awareness* in Man which distinguishes him from the animal; the animal *knows,* but Man *knows that he knows;* Man is at once the performer *and the witness* of his psychological and physical activities. This duality of the human mind has never been adequately explained; but in Theosophy we find the answer. For while the animal soul *consists* of its thoughts, feelings, sensations, etc., in Man we find a *focus of awareness* from which consciousness-functions can be *observed,* and which therefore must be different from them. In the teaching of the Three Logoi and their diverse representations in human nature this mystery finds its rational explanation. What a flood of light this teaching throws on human nature!

Man is the microcosm, a miniature cosmos as truly as a seed is a miniature tree; he combines within himself all the experience of Life's aeonic pilgrimage through the lower Kingdoms of Nature, with the infinite potentialities of a god—a unique center of manifestation for the Supreme Spirit. His divinity however is *latent;* the god within is like a seed fallen in the soil of earthly existence and wholly obscured at first by the dark materials around it. Yet from these dense materials—our earthly experiences—that inner god derives his nourishment as the seed does from the soil; eventually a shoot bores through the ground and starts to deploy the characteristic qualities of its nature. So with us; we *are* divine in essence, but it takes long labor to master the materials of life and learn to use them for the expression of that divinity, that inimitable beauty, which is the very core of our being. And not until the seed has unfolded to the perfect tree, not until we have released the energies of our divine manhood into perfect expression, not until the god within shines forth through all his vehicles of matter, may we cease from effort and return to the great peace. A very different message, this, from the supine beliefs of numerous theologies, and from the blank despair of those who hold that Man is just another brute, a passing flash of life within a sea of death!

VII. FROM SAVAGERY TO DIVINITY

Theosophy is tremendously realistic; it accounts for human life as we actually find it, not merely for human life as moralists think it ought to be, or as cynics think it is. What we actually find is a human world full of animalism, but shot through with rays of reason; cruelty and selfishness, but also tenderness and self-forgetfulness; stupidity and genius; savagery and sainthood. And in the long perspective of the ages we perceive the slow development of finer feelings, of disinterested thought and co-operative activity, in spite of all the remaining brutality. How can this be explained? By animal drives and cultural "accidents"? Or by the ancient Wisdom-Science which sees Intelligence at work throughout the universe? The modern thinking man perceives the failure of the former; let the latter here speak for itself.

An animal is adjusted to his world; he is at home in it and asks for nothing but the natural satisfactions which his environment provides. But man is ever restless; he is never satisfied with nature; he is ever longing for something else and something more. He ever sighs:

> Ah love! Could you and I with Him conspire
> To grasp this sorry scheme of things entire;

Would we not shatter it to bits, and mould
It nearer to the heart's desire?

Now the heart's desire of a dog is a juicy bone; but man is *not* satisfied with "bread alone," with all the material satisfactions that are heaven to animals. Man's heart's desire is always a situation which is *not* here; which exists still only in his mind, which he *imagines.* This faculty of creating images of what is *not* outside, but rises from within, is typically human. It shows that man is a *creator,* not a creature merely. From the superior, inner center of his being he judges and selects or rejects the things his consciousness presents to him; or more correctly: the higher consciousness, that which is focussed in the higher mind or Ego, functions as judge and monitor to the lower which is the immediate psychological activity concerned with personal, physical existence. The one is in effect the *human soul;* the other is the modified animal soul through which the human Ego seeks expression. The physical brain of man is a battlefield of forces, and it depends on which of these are victorious whether a person shall be base or noble, coarse or fine.

The characteristic forces of the human soul, the true, the inner Man, are *will,* and *love,* and *thought*—creative, truth-abiding. The characteristics of man's animal mind are egotism, desire,

and cunning. In earlier stages of the Ego's pilgrimage he is too feeble to control the vigorous animal life with which he is associated, and death soon ends the passionate existence of this "savage." But death affects only the lower elements, never the divine; *the human soul remains,* and soon incarnates in another baby body. Little by little earthly life, through pain and pleasure, drives its lessons home; the Ego understands increasingly the nature of the laws that rule the worlds in which it operates; intelligence increases, and with it control of passion and of conduct; the savage has become a barbarian with a definite code of ethics. Many more lives he lives on earth, gradually becoming civilized within, as civilized forces from without affect him; at last the soul begins to dominate and finds expression in the *cultured* man, the man of *character* and *ability* along some line or other. As this takes place with all the millions of mankind, the standards to which masses can respond are slowly being raised by those who set them; it is this slow advance of human conscience and corresponding conduct that we perceive as we look back in time. For our humanity may be likened to a forest of young trees in which some older ones are interspersed, and which counts even a few of the most venerable specimens of its kind as models for its saplings. Mankind has billions of young souls,

some groups of older ones, and only a few score fully matured. What then can we expect from present day humanity? As a race of souls we are just now becoming adolescent; many of our human groups still linger in the child-stage; and the voice of our benevolent elder brethren is easily smothered in the noise we younger ones are perpetually making.

But anyone who begins to show in his own life the energies of the soul—will, love and thought—is indicating his emergence from the primitive condition in which the mass still lingers. It is obvious that the knowledge of our nature, and of the goal, is a tremendous stimulus in the right direction. What is that goal?

The purpose of our life on earth is certainly not that we shall be rich, or famous, or even always comfortable. Those things have to do with circumstances only, but not with the soul. The soul is all that lasts of any person—whatever his life on earth may have been; it is the evolution of the soul therefore that counts. Hence we are here to bring into activity the latent energies of the soul: the godlike will, the selfless love which is the heart of wisdom, and the creative thought which beautifies the world. No matter what our circumstances, if we develop these fine attributes we travel towards our goal—a perfect human character; if we ignore these powers of the inner man, or

even lose ground previously gained, by ill-will and inertia, we travel away from our goal. It is entirely up to us!

Our body is a temple of divinity; we are essentially gods. Our first responsibility therefore is to gain control over the animal in which we live. We must domesticate the creature, make an obedient pet of it! If we do not, we soon become its slave. The same is true for our emotions and our thoughts; they must be *ours;* not those of an untamed animal. The basic teachings of all great religions are indeed derived from knowledge of our nature and our purpose, and no pious dreams. Sound ethics is sound science of human nature, applied. But mark that we are to *domesticate* our personal nature, not to kill it! And we are to stimulate the creative life within us and find expression for it *through* our personal thought and feeling and activity. For eventually, after hundreds of rehearsals, *every* soul is destined to reveal the sage, or saint, or hero, which is its *real* nature; every soul will at last release the genius and the artist that are dormant at the core. The whole of human life is a conspiracy of nature, as it were, to coax the hidden god from his retirement in the subtler regions of being, into the outer world of physical expression; so that man may *realize* himself as a focus of the universal Life, as truly one with God.

Some elder souls have definitely achieved this consummation. As our Elder Brethren they remain with us to help us on our way; to guide our evolution along the swiftest possible path to that perfection which they have reached. Thus we see Christ and Buddha, and other Great Ones less universally known and recognized, as *men* who were like ourselves once, but who have transcended the limitations of our humanity and have become messengers of Life to our dark world. They show what man *can* be; they are the promise of our eventual victory!

VIII. THE CHALLENGE TO INITIATIVE

From what precedes it must be clear that Theosophy presents a vigorous challenge to every human being to seek the way to perfection and tread it. Theosophy presents a picture of the universe as a realm of Law inviolable, no matter how strongly complicated creeds may lead men to believe in various kinds of divine favoritism or spiritual patronage. The Law of the universe is, first, involution until the Mineral Kingdom has been reached; then, evolution until the pilgrimage through matter is finished, and full realization is achieved. *We* are Life evolving the divine Idea of Man—in an infinite variety of ways. But the fundamental work is the same for every human being: to

bring forth from within the treasures of the Spirit and to embody them in human conduct. While in the lower Kingdoms evolution is instinctive, almost automatic, in Man it is a conscious process once he has become intellectually of age. For people of our stage of development there is no excuse if we do not intelligently direct our individual growth in will, in love, in thought, and in creative expression. Theosophy sees in daily life the school or workshop for the soul. No sentimental flight from reality is advocated by this splendid statement of the facts of being; but a firm grappling with the problems that present themselves to every heart and mind.

If you will meet all the events of life with this in mind, a surge of joy and power will fill your soul and keep you going in spite of odds against you. A mental difficulty becomes a means of deepening and sharpening thought; an emotional crisis paves the way for love; a physical difficulty calls upon the will; each obstacle is but a challenge to the god within, and all life is a great adventure. Our pains are but a warning of the Law that we have acted foolishly; thus they help us to consciousness and knowledge which will prevent a repetition of the same mistakes. Our joys are but the messengers that herald the great Joy that becomes ours when we discover that all life is

One, and that "the Heart of All is Bliss." Life becomes full and rich despite what may be meager circumstances, for wealth of heart and mind wells up from within and pours itself out generously and happily to all around, once the anxiety for self is gone. And what anxiety for self is left when man identifies himself with Life instead of with its passing forms; when in *all* forms he perceives a meaning, an Idea —deathless in itself—that seeks expression through resistant matter? For truly we are here to learn; we are rehearsing for the perfect Play!

Does this sound "too idealistic"? Maybe, for those who can no longer dream and feel and think freely. But not for *realists,* who willingly acknowledge *all* of human nature. For to perceive within ourselves the latent powers of divinity is the experience of every normal human being in youth; to bring some of these powers into *expression* is the *work* of life. And if we do not weep because a house we are building is only in its foundations, or because a child of three cannot yet talk like us, *why* should we sorrow in the recognition that our great work—the expression of our individual divine possibilities—is only barely begun? In this acknowledgment lies wholesomeness and balance; and a sound incentive for joyous work. Do not expect the impossible, but know that

what appears impossible now will be possible eventually, if you steadily press on in the right direction. We can change ourselves; we *are* changing ourselves all the time; let us begin to give intelligent direction to these changes and all will be well. The very inviolability of the Law is a guarantee of our success if we work with the Law. "Be not deceived: God is not mocked; whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap." Thus spoke the initiate-apostle Paul, and Christianity would have had a very different history if his followers had heeded him! Ageless Wisdom has found a voice once more, when it proclaims in Science and in Theosophy alike that only man's own efforts make him free. By using *now* the forces that we have already (whatever they are, they are our only lever) we shall develop them into that perfect will and love and thought which lie concealed in us as inalienable elements of our nature.

Theosophy is a challenge to the best in us, encouraging all good work, good thought, good feeling, and stimulating individual as well as social progress vigorously. It is dynamic; yet in the midst of all our striving it gives peace by showing us the universe and ourselves as manifestations of eternal Being, realizing Its divinity.

CONCLUSION

Only a few of Theosophy's vast store of great ideas have been presented in this lecture. Yet this presentation was sufficient to show that there is nothing unreasonable in the fundamental principles of this ageless Wisdom-Science; nothing contrary to the facts discovered by our scientists or in our own experience. On the other hand, we find that not alone objective facts, but such elusive matters as religious experience and artistic creativeness become perfectly intelligible and appear no longer contradictory. We saw that in such matters as must perforce escape from our powers of direct observation the statements of Theosophy, on *matter* for instance, are in fundamental agreement with the most advanced speculations of modern Science. And as to Man, no fuller acceptance of his foibles as well as his magnificence can be found anywhere; while Theosophy's ringing challenge to his dynamic powers is in full accord with the most vital principles of the new psychology. It must be clear then, even from this very tiny sample of Theosophy, that the "Vision of the gods" is really a life-view for our times, as it has been for the "moderns" of *all* ages. Great poets always sensed these truths and gave them beautiful expression. So did Browning when he sang:

So glorious is our nature, so august, man's inborn uninstructed impulses, his naked spirit so majestical;

Man grows too great for narrow creeds of right and wrong, which fade before the unmeasured thirst for good.

Truth is the strong thing; let man's life be true.

Truth is within ourselves; it takes no rise from outward things . . .

Life is to wake, not sleep; rise, and not rest.

I count life just a stuff to try the soul's strength on . . .

For life with all it yields of joy and woe, and hope and fear, is just our chance of the prize of learning love . . .

For when all is said and done, the noblest message of Theosophy—that Life is One—assures the ultimate victory of universal brotherhood even on this strife-torn earth, a victory won by Love.

LIFE, DEATH, FATE AND FREE WILL

In the lecture *A Life-View for Moderns* we roughly sketched the outlines of the theosophical view of reality and its manifestations in the kingdoms of nature, including Man. We must now look a little more closely at the theosophical conception of human nature, in order to get an answer to the vital problems of life and death, fate and free will, which beset every human mind. Let us first briefly summarize what we said of Man.

We found that the whole universe is the manifestation of the one Reality, the one Cosmic Life or "Logos." But while the lower kingdoms of Nature are woven of only two strands of cosmic energy—representing two aspects of the Logos' triune life—Man combines within himself all three aspects; he is a *seed* of the Divine Life, a true *microcosm* or little cosmos himself. For the Third Logos pours His fiery energy into the matter of our bodies; the Second Logos animates these materials and builds of them the wonderfully complex organisms through which His wisdom emerges as instinctive consciousness; while the First Logos —that aspect of the Divine Life which is rooted in the Eternal, the Absolute, and from the Self directs the whole drama of manifestation—is present in that focus of our being from which

we direct *our* energies, and which makes us self-conscious beings in contrast to the mere instinctive consciousness of the lower kingdoms.

This center of awareness in us, this well of spiritual, i.e., spontaneous or self-active life, is our unique, distinctive characteristic as human beings; it means nothing less than that in our depths we are divine, that our true Self and the Supreme are one. The consciousness that results from the focussing of this divine life in an animal body is what we call the human Soul; it is a fusion of those elements of consciousness which result from the long pilgrimage of life through all the lower kingdoms of Nature, with the creative potentialities of pure divinity. Obviously this fusion, called the Individuality or *Ego* ("I"), will at first show very little of the divine energies latent in its core. But as the core is stirred by the strong stimuli of pain and pleasure from the organism in which it is imprisoned, the sleeping energies are awakened, challenged and "drawn out" (the real meaning of the word education is "leading out"!) from latency into activity.

It is this process of bringing our potential divinity into actuality, of so stirring the life within that it responds increasingly with its godlike powers, which forms the theme, the *Leitmotif*, of the great drama of human existence. It is the growth of the Soul from semi-

consciousness to fully realized divinity, for which we are on earth. Man, a potential god, becomes an actual god by the progressive expression of the powers of his divinity. But that expression of the finest through the coarsest, of the highest manifestation through the lowest, is by no means automatic! It is a masterpiece, the *magnum opus* of the Spirit; it is *work against resistance,* and takes untold millennia of effort. To see this clearly is the indispensable condition for understanding human life as it is found on earth.

In the preceding lecture, *A Life-View For Moderns,* we contrasted the human soul in Man with the animal soul within him, and stated that his brain was a battlefield of the two. In reality of course Man's consciousness is one; but for convenience of expression we use the words *human soul* for those psychological attributes which are directed by the Self, the center of divinity in us, and *animal soul* for those which are derived from the organism—physical, emotional and mental—in which we live and which are merely concerned with the safe and pleasant continuation of our earthly existence. Why should there be a battle within Man; why should there be resistance against the rulership of the Self? Theosophy throws light upon this question, a light for which men look elsewhere in vain.

Man lives in several bodies at once, not merely in his physical vehicle. We explained before that there are other degrees of matter than those *we* know by sense-perception; that there is an *astral* kind which responds to passions, desires and self-centered feelings; and a *mental* matter which responds to thought and only the finest emotions. Man obviously affects these all the time; and just as he has a physical organism by means of which he contacts the physical plane of Nature, so has he an astral and a mental body through which he contacts these subtler planes or worlds of Nature.

Now we mentioned in the preceding lecture that the outpoured life of the Second Logos vivifies the materials of these planes and forms thereby the so-called Elemental Kingdoms—three of them—before it gets stranded as it were in the rigid matter of the Mineral Kingdom. The outstanding characteristic of these Elemental Kingdoms is that they are life *involving,* seeking to identify itself with ever grosser types of matter, seeking eventually to immerse itself in the materials of earth. That is *its* goal, its blind but definite urge, its life-direction. And *this* is the life with which our subtler bodies are instinct! Just as the physical body is undoubtedly an animal, a variety of the Order of Primates of the Mammalian Class,

so are our astral and our mental bodies *elementals,* creatures belonging to the Third and Second Elemental Kingdoms respectively. Each has a life of its own, temporary though it may be, and that life is constantly making itself felt in our consciousness by its promptings and urgings. Obviously, since *its* goal is materiality, ever grosser, it resists *our* efforts towards spirituality, ever finer! It is this sensation-thirsty life of our subtler bodies which inclines our consciousness to things "of the earth earthy," while *we* seek heaven, our soul's own home.

The struggle between the rational soul and the downward tendencies of our consciousness has been dramatically voiced by St. Paul when he wrote: "The good that I would I do not, and the evil that I would not, that I do!" We do not need a medieval devil with horns and tail and hoofs in order to explain this struggle within us; the light of Theosophy reveals the simple facts that account for it. Nor is there any need to see in this elemental opposition any conscious ill-will; for the life in our bodies simply follows its instinctive urge to get involved, immersed in matter. It is vaguely conscious of the potent forces of the soul beyond it and on innumerable occasions has felt the tremendous access of energy which results from drawing that soul's life into itself; thus it develops a perfectly irresponsible cunning

in seeking to engage that higher life time and again.

But we should know that this blind life is utterly dependent on us; that it has not even reached the mineral stage! It is therefore a very foolish thing to allow ourselves to be led by the nose by such primitive forces; when a firm assertion of our will and thought is all that is needed to bring them to terms. For the elemental life is helpless against the far more potent energies of will and love and thought residing in the soul of Man. Where we affirm these energies of ours we soon find that the elemental life in us becomes docile like a well-trained pet; but where for years or decades we have allowed irrational impulses to carry us along, the case is different.

For our subtler bodies are—like the physical—living organisms, dominated by habits; they can no more be suddenly transformed than can a thoroughly spoiled pet or child. They have to be *re-trained,* and that takes time and patience, as well as understanding, and resolute determination. There is a world of sound advice to parents and educators in this simple statement! It is obvious that to allow a child to grow up without discipline is to surrender it to elemental forces which may bring about its ruin; but it is also clear that, to be effective, the discipline must become self-rule by the willing co-oper-

ation of the child's own consciousness. To enlist this co-operation is largely a question of arousing the child's affections and of an early training in wholesome habits, gently but firmly. The same is true—with modifications—for adults and for oneself. We must remember that we are dealing with *living* bodies, all the time; and that changes must be *gradual* if health is to be preserved.

OUR SUBTLER BODIES

Living is easier if we understand a little more of our occult anatomy. Theosophy reveals that what we call our physical body is only the grosser part of our physical equipment—that made up of solids, liquids and gases. But Science recognizes (once again) a finer form of physcial matter, called ether. This exists, occultists tell us, in four densities; all of which form part of our "etheric double," or the subtler counterpart of our gross physical body. It is this etheric body in which vitality, magnetism, and body-electricity reside; in its refined materials operate all the forces of life which show their mysterious effects in the physiological processes of our body. This etheric body is our *real* physical instrument, while the gross vehicle that we see is but its dense armor.

For the etheric body only is in touch with the astral body (through which we sense and

feel); hence we are conscious of the physical body only *through* the etheric. Whenever that "bridge" is out, our gross animal body is a helpless mass of cells with only a diffused, vague life uniting them, but as a whole *unconscious*. For human consciousness, residing in its astral body, has then "passed out" and can not touch the brain. This situation occurs in trance, in shock, and in hypnotic sleep, as well as under the influence of anaesthetics such as chloroform. Quite frequently we hear of people who, during an operation, found themselves *outside* the physical body on which the doctors were operating, while they looked calmly on and felt nothing! Their etheric "bridge," their only link with the body on the operating-table, was out. And all the mysterious phenomena produced by mediums in trance become intelligible when we realize that the etheric body can be partly driven out and utilized by *other* astral entities if the medium allows this or is too feeble to resist it. Likewise, in hypnotism, the astral energy of the hypnotizer takes control of the etheric matter of the subject and makes his body do whatever the operator wants, while the true owner in *his* astral body stands helplessly by. In mesmerism the etheric forces of the practitioner are poured into the etheric body of the patient, with results which depend upon the character and quality of both.

Thus the etheric body accounts not merely for the mysterious biological functions of our physical vehicle, but for a number of abnormal and "inexplicable" physiological and psychical phenomena as well! It is the vehicle of "prana" or vitality particularly, and sends out jets of used vitality-particles in all directions. When it is healthy, vital, fully charged, these jets are straight and vigorous and extend from 8 to 12 inches or more from the surface of the etheric body, at right angles, forming what is known as the health-aura. But when a man is sick or weak, or low in vitality, these jets of force droop like the water coming from a hose under low pressure; and since this is worst just over the afflicted organs, anyone who can see this finds it an aid in diagnosing the trouble.

The etheric body itself is an exact copy—in fact the real matrix—of the physical; but extends slightly beyond the physical skin. It can be seen by all who have developed etheric sight, and by the aid of Kilner screens it becomes temporarily visible to almost anybody of normal eyesight. In sleep it remains immersed in its gross physical partner, vigorously occupying itself in removing toxins and waste materials from the cells and restoring to them fresh vitality and nourishment. That is why we feel so different after a good sleep! But where are *we* meanwhile?

Our consciousness is aware of physical materials—inside our body or out—*only by sensation.* As sensation resides exclusively in the astral body, it is obvious that our consciousness is not identified with any body coarser than the astral; that is the nearest we ever really get to the physical plane. The difference between our waking and sleeping is the difference between an astral body *in active contact with the etheric* (and thereby with the physical), and that same astral body *functioning outside of the etheric.* In other words, sleep is produced by the slipping out of the astral body—the vehicle of consciousness—from the intertwined etheric and gross physical bodies. In that freed condition the astral body can become an independent instrument of consciousness on its *own* plane, in the astral world.

Since that condition of existence is at least as real as the physical—to any consciousness identified with its materials—it is possible to extend the sphere of our experience enormously by such activity at night. Many modern people *are* so active, while their physical body rests; and not a few bring back upon awakening some memories of this astral mode of life. Many do not, however; since it is rarely wise to "give the brain a double load to carry," as one advanced occultist put it. But the result of astral study, for instance, will appear in an increased

sensitiveness to certain influences or ideas encountered in one's waking life, and in deepening conviction about the reality of the invisible worlds. Obviously, the millions who are hardly awake in the daytime, who dream along like vegetables rather than living *alert* to what is going on around them *here*—such folk are very likely even less awake on the astral plane at night; so the great majority of mankind, when asleep, are just dozing vaguely along, absorbed in inner pictures, memories and desires, but unaware of an external astral world. "Be wide awake down here," is the recipe for those who want to be awake "up there"!

The astral body can be seen by a person who has linked his astral sense organs to the brain centers of his corresponding physical senses. Thus we have descriptions of its appearance and functioning in different people. It extends considerably beyond the outlines of the physical body, although most of its matter—its densest part—is found *within* the limits of its grosser partner. The tenuous part that extends beyond, to its own ovoid surface, is called the *aura.* Since every feeling registers as a definite vibration in the matter of this astral body, and vibrations of a certain wave-length make on an observing consciousness the impression of light of a particular color, the emotional condition of a person is recorded with perfect

accuracy in the play of colors through the aura. Here we have, therefore, an *objective* method of studying human psychology, at least where *feeling* is concerned! A higher quality of clairvoyance is necessary to see the objective side of anybody's *thought.*

For thought as such, unmixed with feeling, is too subtle an energy to find expression directly in the astral body. It registers as vibrations in the *mental* body, which corresponds in many ways to the astral body, and in most people is thoroughly intertwined with it. It is only clear, detached thinking which directly affects the mental body and enables it to get organized and increasingly independent of its grosser partner, the astral body. To a person with mental clairvoyance the quality of anyone's mind is therefore immediately visible; and the particular thoughts which he is thinking would appear as definite *thought-forms* in his mental body—granted that they are clearly and distinctly formulated in his mind.

In these three bodies then, the mental, astral and etheric, do we really live. Our consciousness is enmeshed in the former two; our sensations link us with the latter, which is the reservoir of living energies that animate the gross physical body. But neither of these bodies is "I," although we are almost constantly fooled into believing that! They are our *vehicles* in

the three worlds of manifestation; they are like horses which we ride, and should be under our control like well-broken steeds. This image is particularly apt since it reminds us that they are *living* creatures and should be treated well—kindly but firmly—if we are to get the most out of an incarnation. Another point is that they must be made to work harmoniously, in a team; if one of them runs amuck or fights the others there is trouble, and eventually insanity or death.

The sense of *personal* self-hood resides in the mental body, in people of our stage of development. But the deeper "I" which judges and seeks to direct the personal self has its abode beyond the mental body, in what is called the *causal* body. As its materials are derived from the three higher subplanes of the mental world it is also called the *higher mental* body, in contrast to the *lower mental* body which we just discussed. The term "body" in this connection must not deceive us into thinking that our highest consciousness (highest at least for the time being) resides in a three-dimensional material object akin to the animal organism we know on the physical plane. Rather should we think of the causal "body" as an exceedingly delicate and beautiful oval form scintillating with life and light, expressing in the subtlest materials of the mental world the Idea of our unique

Individuality, the sense of separate, individualized intelligence. This sense of separate individuality finds objective expression in mental matter as the coruscating ovoid film which screens off the life within this form from the sea of intelligent life without. Only in that sense can the vehicle of the Individuality or "Ego" be called a *body.* When consciousness begins to function *beyond* thought, in the quality of life called *buddhi* or Christ-consciousness (pure Intuition) it is no longer held by any limiting form however fine, because it feels no longer separate, it recognizes *all* life as its own.

It is the *causal body* then which we may aptly call the vehicle of the human soul. In it all growth of the soul-consciousness is registered in the delicate materials of the higher mental plane. An occultist with clairvoyance on this subtle plane will know at one glance the *real* nature of the man he is observing, his *true* character—regardless of the appearance of the personality. Many people do not yet bring the consciousness of the causal body into working relations with the physical brain. They *are,* for all practical purposes, the life that is enmeshed in the three lower bodies: mental, astral, physical. To them life is experiencing stimuli from the worlds with which these bodies bring them in contact, and responding

to these stimuli in terms of concrete, personal thought, emotion and activity.

But as soon as the impersonal intelligence begins to function in a man, as soon as he begins to bring the will and love and thought of the *higher* self into the direction and expression of the lower, life becomes a drama full of interest and meaning. For then the mind becomes the instrument by which the outer world and its events are converted into ideas and principles by which the soul grasps their significance, and by which the inner world of *soul* is given expression in the outer by creative thought and feeling, and purposeful activity. Then life becomes the work of nourishing the soul with the world's inexhaustible store of symbols which are hiding and revealing the Ideas of the Divine Mind, and of feeding that same world with the truth, the love, the beauty, and the power of which that soul is a unique expression.

LIFE AND DEATH

We are now in a position to understand many aspects of human life which otherwise remain impenetrable mysteries. What we "in sense immured" perceive of Man is but a fragment of a fragment! The real Man lives in his own higher mental world, a life and form of marvellous beauty and complexity, which

could not possibly find full expression in any physical person. A fragment of this higher Man, this "Ego," is enmeshed in the materials of his mental and astral bodies, thus forming what we call his *personality;* and it is again a fragment only of the latter which during waking hours reveals itself through the physical body which *we* know as Mr., Miss or Mrs. So-and-So.

This is in full accord with modern European schools of psychology, as well as with the *facts* stressed by American behaviorism. The European idea of the unconscious or subconscious psyche receives a new and illuminating meaning from Theosophy, which recognizes it as all those psychological elements of our nature which fail to find expression through the physical brain. In reality the unconscious should be divided into two divisions: the subconscious and the superconscious. The former is the instinctive life of the bodies when it does *not* assert itself in conduct or in brain-thought. The super-conscious is such elements of our *inner* consciousness as remain unexpressed in the brain-consciousness; it is obviously much vaster than the waking consciousness can ever be. Man's everlasting sense of homesickness for beauty, understanding, mastery; his longing for what is *here* impossible—immortality for instance; his symbolic dreams; his artistic crea-

tions; all these can be explained in the light of this analysis of his hidden nature.

But it is equally true that what we call a personality is little more than a well-knit bundle, a "structure" of mental, emotional and physical *habits*—anchored as it were in a particular physical organism. These habits are indeed the product of the interaction of the individual with his environment, as the behaviorist psychologists tell us. They are to an enormous degree shaped by that environment—the culture of our group. But *we* are *not* these habits, even though we are thoroughly identified with them and consider them ourselves. They are woven into a structure, a unity, by an inner cohesive force which no behaviorist has yet explained, and which produces in each individual a *different* personality from much the same cultural materials.

The *inner* character of a person, which begins to show itself already in his infancy, and which in some becomes a force that *dominates* the environment to an extraordinary degree, can only be explained satisfactorily by the recognition of psychological factors behind and *beyond* those which we can trace during the life-time of the individual. Theosophy recognizes once more the Soul as the essential Man, in spite of all behaviorists' protests; recognizes too that only such aspects of the living energies of the

Soul emerge in waking physical consciousness as have been given an *opportunity* for expression by the *training* of the organism.

This means then, that the personality is but the outward-turned energies of the Soul which have been organized into a pattern, a coherent set of habits; this is all we see of a man—the rest, the most important part in many respects, remains unmanifest, hidden in the "unconscious" (but unconscious only from the *physical* plane point of view, and by no means from that of the same Soul functioning in each of its subtler bodies!). Psychological mysteries such as inspiration, genius, and—on the opposite end—idiocy and congenital criminality, can be explained without difficulty by the aid of this view of the Soul and its various bodies. Thus human life becomes intelligible as a limited, three-dimensional projection of a many-dimensional reality; a stream of conscious life remaining largely subterranean and of which only the choppy surface becomes visible when it emerges into the light of *our* common day: physical existence!

Next to life, the greatest mystery is *death.* Yet death too will lose its mystery and its terror if we see it through the windows of theosophical concepts which represent the hidden facts. For death is simply the withdrawal, permanently, of the Soul in its astral body

from the physical body, which it previously abandoned, nightly, innumerable times. One other difference between sleep and death is that in sleep the etheric body remains intertwined with the gross physical, while at death it is withdrawn from the latter; then both are cast off and left behind by the Man in his astral body. The etheric body hovers around the places where its owner used to live or work, and gravitates to the dead physical body, soon to disintegrate like the latter. It is sometimes seen by sensitives shortly after the death of the man and then gives rise to the most phantastic "ghost" stories. But it is a perfectly harmless and helpless thing; whatever life it has is ebbing away swiftly and is soon dispersed completely.

Meanwhile consciousness is centered in the astral body; but having lost the etheric "bridge," it is unable to make contact again with the physical world through the now lifeless physical body. This inhibition drives consciousness to focus its attention on the astral world, and if it was not already awake there during its habitual withdrawals from the physical scene in sleep, it now *wakes up* to its "new" environment.

Unless the will of its owner prevents it, a rearrangement of materials in the astral body takes place—automatically—which places the

grossest materials on its surface. This makes it sensitive to the grosser vibrations of the astral world only; hence the individual is aware of only such life and matter in the astral world as is of this gross quality; he perceives the *lower* subplanes only. In the case of a coarse individual this is by no means a "nice" environment! Only as his own grosser matter is eliminated and the finer elements of his astral body form its surface, does he become aware of the more desirable side of the astral world. This had led to the popular belief that the soul of a deceased person wanders through "sphere after sphere" of the "other" world. An awakened consciousness and a firm will may prevent this "onion-skin" arrangement in the astral body and thereby open up the whole astral world at once to the consciousness of the "dead" person.

Obviously then, death does *not* produce a sudden change in an individual which makes him into an angel. He is exactly the same person as before his permanent departure from this world of sorrows. Only, he is now *minus* a physical body through which to sense physical pleasures and pains; and that *does* make a difference—after a while. A person who was the slave of a certain bad habit—say, a drunkard —will still crave for the sensation that dominated him before death. But no amount of

"astral liquor" will produce that coveted sensation; it requires a *physical* palate and stomach and brain to produce that particular thrill. Hence our drunkard feels what any living person would feel who is suddenly deprived of an habitual stimulant, by being put into jail for instance; he feels utterly miserable, he is truly "in hell"!

Rightly then the churches have warned "sinners" that they would go to hell after their death, to be consumed (without the comfort of losing consciousness!) by "fire"—the burning craving of unsatisfied desire. Only it cannot be an "everlasting" affair, and it is no punishment by a wrathful and cruel deity; it is simply the natural consequence of getting so deeply involved in sensation that life seems miserable without it. Just as is the case with drug or alcohol addicts on earth, *time* comes to the rescue; after a while these longings starve to death because they are never fed, and the individual becomes free of them and suffers no more.

The facts of life after death are therefore nearer to the Roman Catholic teaching of *purgatory:* a period of purging the individual from such psychological elements as cannot be maintained in superphysical conditions. This is obviously a *temporary* matter, depending on how deeply a person is involved in sense-satis-

faction; for an individual of fine taste and self-control, who lives in the finer feelings and interests *only,* that time of purification is reduced to zero. In this sense alone it is true that the "good" go "straight to heaven," as the churches tell us; but this "goodness" must clearly be a *positive* refinement of character and no mere negative abstinence from overt conventional wrong-doing.

For "heaven" is the religious name of that condition in which there is no frustration of desire, no disharmony within or without. As long as there is *desire* for any personal happiness or satisfaction, we do not yet enjoy "heaven," in which desire is immediately consumed by its realization. Even the highest type of astral life contains, therefore, some element of dissatisfaction; something left to be desired. Only when the astral body is completely abandoned, as was the physical before, the "heaven" condition is reached. That simply means that after "dying" a second "death," the consciousness of the individual functions *in his mental body only;* thus he contacts the *mental* world alone.

This is the world in which all thought is immediately objectified—becomes *real* to the thinker. Whatever therefore is left of personal thought and feeling finds in this world an immediate response, a complete "objective"

realization. We must remember that objectivity is relative to the observing consciousness. To *us* physical matter only is objective (and then but three out of the seven kinds surrounding us); to consciousness clothed in its astral vehicle only astral matter is "real"; likewise to consciousness clothed in no denser matter than that of its mental body, only mental matter—what *we* call "the stuff that dreams are made of"—is objectively real. Whatever is thought, therefore, by anyone in this condition, is immediately *experienced.*

Since all the grosser elements have been burned out by now, only the finer habits of consciousness are left, and only these *can* find expression in the subtler materials of this mental world. Thus we find in "heaven" not the person as we might have known him on earth, but that same person idealized, purified from grossness and selfish desire, perfectly happy and radiant with the joy of realized dreams.

The thing to note in this theosophical description of life after death is the completeness of the logic of events; its absence of all sentimentality whether describing "hell" or "heaven," as both these theological inventions are shown to mean simply the inevitable concomitants of life's withdrawal from the grosser matter into the finer, after the intimate association with an animal body which in our ignor-

ance we had considered the *only* human *life!* In this new light we see things in perspective once more: the dipping down of individual Intelligence into the worlds of concrete manifestation, in order to experience it, know and conquer it, and after a while withdrawal—by degrees—into its *own* world of life.

For even "heaven," life in the mental world, is not the end of the Soul's pilgrimage. It is but the flowering of such elements of its life as budded during its physical imprisonment; it is but the idealized life of *a personality.* And a personality is only a fragment of the Soul, encased in mental matter still, even at this stage. So after its cup of happiness has been emptied to the bottom, when the limits for *personal* realization of life have at last been reached, there is a third withdrawal, a third "death," when consciousness abandons the *mental* body and is united once more with its source, the Individuality or Soul in its higher mental vehicle, the causal body.

Only that which is universally human in the highest sense, can be expressed in the delicate matter of this causal body. Thus only the eternal principles of truth, goodness and beauty, the lasting values of human character and ability, which the past life of the individual may have stirred and strengthened—*only these are left* of this whole personal existence; tinged

at the worst by some highly intellectual pride or by the Soul's own large ambitions. The personal life is over, and the Soul is once more its own true self—a pilgrim of the universe. Yet, only for a while can this be so. The Law calls for action again!

FATE, AND FREE WILL

Immutable, inviolable is the Law of Nature that every disturbance of the cosmic equilibrium results in consequences which restore that equilibrium and which *operate back on the center of disturbance.* This Law of action and reaction, this Law of Equilibrium or Readjustment, is called in the East the Law of *Karma,* (from Sanskrit: to *do).* We see it at work all the time in human life, too; it rules in the psychological as well as in the physical sphere —in connection with what we call good as well as in connection with what we call evil purposes. All efforts to harm another eventually cause harm to oneself; all efforts to help another bring at last blessing to oneself. To light a haystack requires only a spark or a match, and it does not matter in the least whether the match is struck by a child or a man, with knowledge of the consequences or without; the Law is impersonal, and ignorance of it does not halt its operations.

We are continually affecting ourselves and

the world around us helpfully or otherwise; so continually forces—helpful or hindering—flow back upon us *with* the harvest of consequences which our causes produced. Thus there is a natural justice in the universe, from which no being can escape so long as he is in manifestation. We do not always believe this, because in human life appearances are sometimes contradicting this law of justice. We see good people trodden down and ruthless evil win temporary victories. Sometimes a murderer is not found out and lives unpunished till his natural death; then, "*Where* is justice?" we may ask.

The answer lies in the fact, which Theosophy once more clearly upholds, that the *real* Man is the Soul, and that whatever karmic debts have not been paid during the lifetime of a particular personality, *will* be paid in *another* manifestation of that same Soul in that sphere of existence in which the debt was contracted. This means that just so long as debts contracted in the *physical* world are left unpaid, or rewards due left unclaimed, the karmic Law compels a new appearance of the Soul in a *physical* body, to settle the account, one might say. Likewise emotional forces that have affected other lives require, for their equilibrating, that the Soul shall again wear its astral vesture; just as mental energies find their kar-

mic outlet only when a mental body is available to receive their harvest.

Re-incarnation then, the re-birth of the Soul in a human form, is unavoidable so long as the karmic score of that Soul has not been settled. As St. Paul said, the divine Law which men call God cannot be "mocked" or circumvented: "*whatsoever* a man soweth, *that* shall he also reap"; but note that what we sow is seeds and what we reap is the wheat or tares *which grew out of these seeds!* In other words, karmic Law is not a literal automatic law of action equalling reaction, but a law of *consequences* which are born from *causes* we have sown. It is this Law which compels the Soul to dip again with some of its life into the matter of the mental, astral and physical worlds; and which prepares at each return exactly the type of environment and the quality of body which will make the most advantageous balancing of the karmic account possible.

Intelligent administrators of the Law arrange this set of factors for each human being coming into incarnation; for the universe is filled with life and many beings other than Man function in it on the subtler planes of Nature. What these "Lords of Karma" set aside of the total karmic score for liquidation in one life-time is what men call that individual's *Fate.* It includes heredity and environ-

ment, and all those unsought events which—whether pleasant or unpleasant to the individual himself—form the boundaries of his freedom, the lines between which he finds himself compelled to travel. Yet let it be clearly understood that *his* activity alone, in former lives on earth, has provided the material from which the karmic agents must choose the new life's "fate"! Our fate is woven out of the strands that *we* provided by our past thinking, feeling and acting; it is external and compulsory only from the point of view of our limited *personal* consciousness, but it is *willed justice* from the point of view of the Soul.

Under the sway of this great Law, then, Man incarnates over and over again, hundreds of times. For in his ignorance of natural laws he is at first, in incarnation after incarnation, a helpless victim of desires which storm through his astral body. He acts irresponsibly and blindly, passionately, using what intelligence he has exclusively for his own wants regardless of the happiness or the needs of others; thus storing up for himself a vast amount of unpleasant karmic indebtedness. As he begins to learn from suffering, and gives attention to others' as well as to his own desires, he gets opportunites to cancel some of the unpleasant karma by helpful acts towards those he thoughtlessly made suffer in the past; he also makes

some new "good" karma by helpfulness towards those around him with whom he had no previous contacts, and therefore no debts.

But even the civilized man, who has lived on earth hundreds of times, is still making mixed karma while he thinks and acts as a separated individual. Not until his thought, feeling and action becomes harmonious with the truth of being—which is the oneness of Life, and therefore find expression as love and justice—does a man cease to create new karma; and even then he has to clear his old account before he is completely free. Some souls have reached that stage of insight which makes them want to pay their karmic debt in bigger installments so to say, to be free more quickly. These noble persons then are seen to get terrific beatings from "cruel Fate"; but they find within themselves the strength to "take it," and maintain their faith in the ultimate justice of the universe in spite of everything. It is such cases which we often ignorantly interpret as giving the lie to the belief that love and justice triumph in the end, even in this physical world. Appearances deceive! The whole of Nature is almost a conspiracy of education for the Soul; whatever blinded personalities may think or do, the harvest of its sowing is according to the seed, for perfect justice rules the universe.

Once a man really sees this, he knows that

he is the maker of his fate, the fashioner of his destiny. For at each moment he is pouring out his energies in the stream of human life, and *he* alone determines what he throws in, and what direction he gives to his forces. Over and over we are placed before a choice, and *free* to choose one way or another. Out of innumerable such choices in the past is woven our present fate; but every new choice we make is a new factor modifying that fate! Nothing is changeless but eternal Law itself.

So each day, each hour of life, we are weaving for ourselves the strands of destiny; *no outside god compels!* The mystery of fate is *not* unsolvable; for fate is the accumulated effect of our innumerable *choices* of the past. It is true that most of our choices were made in ignorance, and even compelled by forces then beyond our weak control. But this is *not* an argument against free will! The absence of true willing in the earlier stages of our pilgrimage does not mean the absence of a latent divine power in the Soul, called *will;* for as soon as *will asserts itself* in our life it *proves* its free, spiritual quality by driving away fear, and passion, and all those elemental forces to which we previously were enslaved; thus a choice made by will is truly a *free* choice. Free will, therefore, must be *evolved;* it is not contradicted by Fate, for as soon as it begins to

function in a man it *changes* Fate. Each conscious choice then helps to weave our destiny on the background of that past which we have woven largely in ignorance and bondage. Let us illustrate that truth by a simple image.

Let us suppose a man is rowing in a small boat on a river, a boat made by himself and called "Heredity." How free is this man in his little craft? He is bound to his boat (if he wants to stay dry and alive); he cannot change it now. At most he can destroy it, or let it sink by taking a prop out of the bottom; as many people do with their biological heritage by foolish living! He cannot change the river's course, or the tide, or the wind, or the waves; he cannot change the shallows and the depths, the current and the driftwood—all these are cosmic factors which he has to take for granted and with which he has to deal. But his *position* in regard to all of them is given by his previous movements; by the place where he left shore, and by the rowing he has done since. All of this together presents him with *the actual situation.*

How free is he? He has the perfect freedom to *decide* in what direction he is going to row: upstream or downstream, or across, or—not to row at all, just drifting with the current. In addition he has the freedom to *act* on his decision; he can use his oars! He can use them

energetically and intelligently, or lazily and stupidly; he can even be so careless as to lose one or both of them. In all these choices he is *free,* absolutely free! And if we think of the oars as the powers we have up till now developed, the parable speaks for itself. We have free will, but every time we use our power to act we bring about a new situation which—to some extent at least—binds us. This is illustrated easily by travelling. If you board a train or ocean-liner you have to stay aboard until the train stops, or the boat has docked. You are not free to move beyond its limits—except at peril of your life. But you were free to choose that train or boat instead of another; you are free again to choose where you will go and how you will travel when you have left the present vehicle of transportation. Exactly such is *life.*

All this has been quite beautifully said by Edward Carpenter in his famous prose-poem called "The Secret of Time and Satan," from which we quote, in closing:

> The art of creation, like every other art, has to be learnt.
>
> Slowly, slowly, through many years, thou buildest up thy body, and the power that thou now hast (such as it is) to build up this present body, thou hast acquired in the past in other bodies;

So in the future shalt thou use again the power that thou now acquirest.

But the power to build up the body includes all powers.

Do not be dismayed because thou art yet a child of chance, and at the mercy greatly both of Nature and fate;

Because if thou wert not subject to chance, then wouldst thou be Master of thyself; but since thou art not yet Master of thine own passions and powers, in that degree must thou needs be at the mercy of some other power.

And if thou choosest to call that power "Chance," well and good. It is the Angel with whom thou hast to wrestle. . . .

For (over and over again) there is nothing that is evil except because a man has not mastery over it; and there is no good thing that is not evil if it have a mastery over a man;

And there is no passion or power, or pleasure or pain, or created thing whatsoever, which is not ultimately for man and for his use—or which he need be afraid of or ashamed at. . . .

And seest thou not that except for Death thou couldst never overcome Death—

For since by being a slave to things of sense thou hast clothed thyself with a body which thou art

not Master of, thou wert condemned to a living tomb were that body not to be destroyed.

But now through pain and suffering out of this tomb shalt thou come; and through the experience thou hast acquired shalt build thyself a new and better body;

And so on many times, till thou spreadest wings and hast all powers diabolic and angelic concentred in thy flesh.